



Passports Kites! Resource Guide Grades 3-5

A kite is a heavier than air, flying, tethered, man-made object. The necessary lift that makes the kite fly is generated when airflow over and under the kite creates low pressure above the kite and high pressure below it keeping it in the sky.

Today, in addition to kites that are mainly flown for recreation, art or practical use, there are sport kites and power kites. Sport kites are flown in aerial ballet. Power kites are multi-line steerable kites designed to generate excess force which can be applied in related activities such as kite surfing or kite landboarding.



History

Nearly 3,000 years ago the kite was first invented and popularized in China, where materials ideal for kite building were readily available: silk fabric for sail material, fine, high-tensile-strength silk for flying line, and resilient bamboo for a strong, lightweight framework. By at least 549 AD paper kites were being flown, as it was recorded in that year, a paper kite was used as a message for a rescue mission. Ancient and medieval Chinese sources list other uses of kites for measuring distances, testing the wind, lifting men, signaling, and communication for military operations. The earliest known Chinese kites were flat (not bowed) and often rectangular. Later, tailless kites incorporated a stabilizing bowline. Kites were decorated with mythological motifs and legendary figures; some were fitted with strings and whistles to make musical sounds while flying.

Reading

Read the article, Making A Kite, found at the Drachen Foundation website below

<http://www.drachen.org/pdf/Student-Readings/Extensions-for-KiteTypes/MakingaKite.pdf>

After students read the article together or individually, they may discuss or provide written responses to the questions and activities below.



Context Clues:

1. Using the sentence in the first paragraph, what do think spar means in this article?
2. Using the sentence in the second paragraph, define lift in your own words.

Writing:

1. How do you think the kites that were used to catch fish might have worked? Write a short paragraph describing the process.
2. After reading the article, describe how the kite artist may have transformed the Dragon Bones kite into the Dragon kite.



Comprehension:

1. How should you decide which materials to use for your kite?
2. Write one sentence that states the main idea of this article.

Math:

1. How many yards long is the dragon kite in the article's picture?
2. How might you compare that length to something you know, in order to help you visualize its size?

Creative Writing:

1. Pretend you are a kite. What is it like? Think about the different aspects of being a kite you could describe. For Example: being created, being lifted into the air, flying in the sky, landing, etc.
2. Write a story about a kite that is used in an unusual way. Think about the many different ways kites have been used in the past. Your story can be fiction or non-fiction.

Websites for additional sources:

<http://www.tutorials.com/04/0479/0479.asp>

<http://www.aloha.net/~bigwind/20kidskites.html>